(d) The Universalisation of Elementary Education and eradication of adult illiteracy form the two-pronged strategy for improving the literacy rate of the country. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a comprehensive programme for universalizing quality Elementary Education by 2010.

In the XI Plan, special focus would be given to SCs, STs, Minorities and rural women under National Literacy Mission. Focus would also be on low literacy States, tribal areas, other disadvantaged groups and adolescents.

Impact of price rise on Mid-Day Meal Scheme

96. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mid-Day Meal Scheme of Government will get a jolt as the Department of Food and Public Distribution has enhanced the prices of wheat and rice for the Scheme, and that for expansion of the scheme, the prices will be still higher;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering any alternative proposal for this highly successful project;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the steps being taken to make this project a success?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) No, Sir. No communication regarding enhancement of prices of wheat and rice for the Mid-Day Meal Scheme has been received from the Department of Food and Public Distribution. As per the existing terms and conditions, the cost of foodgrains is reimbursed at BPL rates.

(b) to (e) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.

Gender parity in higher education

97. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the mid term review of UN Millennium Development Goals 2015, while gender parity is on track for primary and secondary education, the progress is slow in higher education;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken for gender parity in higher education by the stipulated time-frame?S

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) While no such comparison

of Gender-Gap between different sectors of education has come to notice in the mid term review of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, efforts are being made through the following schemes of the University Grants Commission for raising the present level of enrolment of women of 40.50% in higher education:

1. Women Hostel for Colleges.
2. Day Care Centres in Universities.
3. Women Hostel in Universities.
4. Basic facilities for Women.
5. Professional Courses for Women.
6. Scholarship for Women in Professional Programmes.
7. Capacity Building for Women Managers in Higher Education.

Components of SSA

98. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of components under the SSA;

(b) the targets set under SSA during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise;

(c) the achievements of targets set during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise;

(d) whether it is a fact that enrolment targets under SSA have not been achieved; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which provides for universalisation of elementary education in the country in a time bound manner has *inter-alia* components relating to school infrastructure, alternative schooling for out of school children, girls education, education of children from disadvantaged sections of society, education for children with special needs, quality of education, teacher recruitment etc.

(b) and (c) State-wise targets fixed during the last three years and achievements thereof are given in the Statement *(See* below)

(d) and (e) Since 2001-02 a large number of children have been brought into the fold of elementary school education. The number of out of school children which was 320 lakh in 2001-02 has come down to 70 lakh in 2006-07 as per State reports received.